

CITY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA  
**COUNCIL POLICY**

CURRENT

SUBJECT: LIMITED AND CONTROLLED ACCESS DEVELOPMENT (GATED COMMUNITIES)  
POLICY NO.: 600-42  
EFFECTIVE DATE: November 26, 1996

**BACKGROUND:**

The City of San Diego has received requests to approve limited or controlled access projects for both existing and new development. Often these requests are in response to concerns for security, to mitigate undesirable traffic impacts, to provide a lifestyle alternative, or to market a residential development. In view of this, a policy is desirable to establish the criteria by which applications are evaluated.

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for City consideration of applications for limited or controlled access projects in conjunction with a concurrent discretionary action, such as a Tentative Map, Planned Residential Development Permit, street vacation, or other approval processes determined by the City Manager. It establishes definitions and criteria, and references regulatory codes, ordinances and manuals that will be used in evaluating the merits of individual projects. Also, the purpose of this policy is to minimize the impact on surrounding neighborhoods, ensure appropriate public and emergency vehicle access, and provide general guidance on the design concept of walls.

**DEFINITIONS:**

1. A **limited access** project uses bollards, median chokers, curb pop-outs, channelization of intersections, left/right turn only directional signs, parking restrictions, one-way streets, or other mechanisms on public streets to control, but not prohibit vehicular access. Vehicles would still be able to enter the neighborhood and access all streets, but mechanisms would be used to control the flow of traffic.
2. A **controlled access** project has private streets or driveway access to public streets, with gates used to prevent unauthorized public access to the project. Such streets must be private from the onset or as a result of a street vacation.

**POLICY:**

The City should review each project that proposes limited or controlled public access, based on its individual merits and its ability to serve a community interest. In its review, the City shall consider information provided by all reviewing departments.

Given the range of controlled access measures, development type, and the ability to regulate them

without dictating design, only general criteria are set forth in this policy. This policy is to be used in conjunction with a concurrent application for discretionary action, such as a Planned Residential Development permit, tentative map, street vacation, or other approval processes determined by the City Manager.

Decisions must conform to legal and procedural requirements set forth in the California Streets and Highways Code, the Vehicle Code and the Government Code, and must also be consistent with City ordinances, policies, and design manuals with respect to public and private street right-of-way standards.

**CRITERIA:**

Each new proposal to provide limited or controlled access will be evaluated as to how it meets the following criteria.

1. The controlled access project provides a community and/or internal project benefit or satisfies a specific internal community need, such as but not limited to enhancing community safety and security, improving existing or projected traffic impacts, promoting community cooperation or identity, or significantly enhancing the quality of life.
2. The limited access project includes alternative means of reducing traffic impacts as described in the Street Design Manual, as well as gateways, bollards, median-chokers, curb pop-outs, channelization of intersections, left/right turn only directional signs, one-way streets, and parking restrictions.
3. The limited or controlled access project does not significantly displace the existing or projected traffic circulation or parking impacts to adjacent areas.
4. Public access is not denied to open spaces, beaches, parks, trails, commercial areas, transit stops, major streets, schools, or public facilities which are available for public use or access.
5. The street system, gated entry, and premises identification meet all criteria established in state regulations, city ordinances, policies, and design manuals.
6. Street access to gated projects has been provided for police, fire, and other emergency vehicles by means that are acceptable to the providers of those services.
7. Access will be provided for postal, trash pick-up, and school busses. Pursuant to the Municipal Code, the City will not collect trash on private property.
8. The City shall be granted general utility and utility access easements on private streets.

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9. The location of gates shall provide adequate stacking areas to accommodate traffic to the project. Stacking shall not adversely impact circulation on any public street.
10. Walls or other enclosures attached to gates should use setbacks, landscaping, human-scale articulation and/or other design features. The enclosures will be governed by relevant sections of the zoning code.

**HISTORY:**

Adopted by Resolution R-288089 11/26/1996